



# Stephens City Newsletter

VOLUME 29, ISSUE 1 JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2010

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*Stephens City Newsletter* is published by the Town Government of Stephens City for its citizens, to inform, to apprise, and to clarify the issues and undertakings before the Town Government. Citizen feedback is encouraged. Contact the Town Office at 1033 Locust Street weekdays between the hours of 8:30a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or by mail: P.O. Box 250, Stephens City, VA 22655

**Phone:** 869-3087 **Fax:** 869-6166 **Police:** 868-1012 **Website:** [www.stephenscity.vi.virginia.gov](http://www.stephenscity.vi.virginia.gov)

### *A Message from the Mayor*

By this time 2009 will have passed. I can not believe how fast the year has gone. The economic conditions that posed such problems during 2009 will continue to challenge the Town in 2010. The issues related to growth or preparation for growth are still with us and will continue to be addressed in the coming New Year. Reduced revenue from the state as well as from local sources will make these tasks more challenging. However through careful preparation, planning and frugal practices, the Town is still in a strong financial condition and I am confident we will weather the storm.

This great nation, including the Town of Stephens City, has weathered many crises and came out of them stronger than ever. Through the careful planning and preparation mentioned above, the Town is poised to grow stronger as recovery progresses. I credit this condition not only to the wise decisions made by the Council but also to the staff led by Town

Manager Mike Kehoe for their diligence and hard work.

This New Year, 2010, is also an election year. The Mayor's position and three council seats are up for election. I take this opportunity to announce publicly that I will not seek another term.

I was first elected in 1994 and have enjoyed representing the Town and its citizens for 16 years. As the old saying goes "a lot of water has passed under the bridge" in that time. There have been a lot of trying times and a whole lot of rewarding times. Even though there seems to be more to get done now than when I first came in to office, a lot has been accomplished. There will never be a time that there will not be issues to deal with or that one might want to see concluded, however there must be a finish line drawn and I feel the time is now. It has been my privilege to serve these many years and I sincerely thank you, the citizens for the opportunity.

**Mayor Ray Ewing**



*Recycled Christmas  
Trees will be picked  
up on Tuesday,  
January 5th and 12th,  
2009*

#### SNOW REMOVAL

The almanac says there will be a lot of snow this winter, as we already have had. So in short this is what is required by the Town Code.

Property owners or occupants must clear all public sidewalks of snow where sidewalks front their property. This must be done within 6 hours after snow has ceased to fall or no later than noon the next day if snowfall stops overnight. Please contact the Town Office if you have any questions.

### From the Town Manager's Desk...

#### 2010 is Here

It doesn't seem that long ago that everyone was wondering about the new Millennium and what it would bring and the impending doom of Y2K. Now 10 years later we know that the world didn't crash and shut down as a result of a time change but the world did change!

In Stephens City where the pace is a little slower, there were changes too.

The most noticeable changes around the Town were additional housing growth, the expansion of the commercial area outside of the Town along the Rte 277 corridor and the expansion of the Town's Corporate Limits north and south along Rte 11. These changes were well underway by the middle of the decade. It is estimated that the Town's population increased to nearly 1500 residents and the land area of Stephens City increased by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  square miles to almost  $2\frac{1}{2}$  square miles. The annexation has brought additional acreage along the CSX railroad and along the Rte 11 corridor that will lead to commercial and industrial growth. Although development has not occurred in the annexation areas, the Town has approved or is in the process of reviewing plans to bring jobs to Stephens City as well as creating a future by-pass from Rte 11 N to Rte 11 S. that will run parallel to the CSX railroad.

The past decade also saw several persons retire from employment with the Town for the first time. Joyce Zalar, former Town Clerk retired in 2003,

Gil Barrington, former Police Chief retired in 2006, Robert "Bob" Florence, with the Town's maintenance department, along with Kathy Monk, Town Treasurer and Sherwood "Woody" Simmers, Police Officer all retired in 2009. Aside from retirements the Town saw very little turnover in personnel during these years but did see an increase in staff positions with a Town Planner, another part-time maintenance department position and another Police Officer. The total fulltime Town positions now is 10.

There was very little turnover with regard to the elected officials. Councilmen Joe Hollis and Jim Harter are the only two new councilmen now serving who were not on Town Council at the beginning of the decade.

Taxes and utility rates did not vary too much over the past decade. There was one water sewer rate increase in 2001 that is still in effect although there have been increases in fees for connecting to Town water and sewer and other administrative fees. The Real Estate tax rate increased in 2005 from 5 cents per hundred dollar valuation to 7.6 cents per hundred and in 2008 a 25 cent tax was imposed on cigarettes per pack.

We look upon the next decade with optimism knowing that Stephens City is planning for the future while still holding to its small town idealism and continuing to be an affordable safe community to live in.

*Mike Kehoe  
Town Manager*

## Water and Sewer Billing

Water and sewer bills for the bi-monthly billing end **February 3, 2010** and are due upon receipt.

After **February 3, 2010** a **10% penalty** will be added. On **February 10, 2010** service will be discontinued for delinquency. A reconnect fee of **\$25** plus the full amount of the bill must be paid

before service can be restored.

Just a reminder that for your convenience a night drop is available at the Town Office for dropping off check or money order payments and payments can now be made online at the Town's website. Only Water/ Sewer bills can be paid using a Visa or MasterCard! If you pay a bill

online after the due date, you will still be responsible for the 10% penalty and if the bill is paid after the shut off date, the \$25 reconnect fee will need to be paid as well, prior to reconnection.

**Please do not put cash in the drop box!**

### *Ways to Save in Water Consumption!*

Throughout the year, the Town will bring you a series on various ways to save in water consumption and usage. These are helpful hints provided by the American Water and Energy Savers. This website can be found at [www.americanwater.com](http://www.americanwater.com) and it is our hope that you find this information helpful throughout the year.

#### *Saving Water Indoors:*

1. Never put water down the drain when there may be another use for it such as watering a plant or garden, or cleaning.
2. Verify that your home is leak-free, because many homes have hidden water leaks. Have your water meter read by Town personnel before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, there is a leak.
3. Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at the rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste 2,700 gallons per year which will add to the cost of water and sewer utilities, or strain your septic system.
4. Check for toilet tank leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear within 30 minutes. Check the toilet for worn out, corroded or bent parts. Most replacement parts are inexpensive, readily available and easily installed. (Flush as soon as test is done, since food coloring may stain tank.)
5. Avoid flushing the toilet unnecessarily. Dispose of tissues, insects and other such waste in the trash rather than the toilet.

### The Town Clerk's Notes...

#### **AN ELECTION YEAR**

Elections for Town Council will be held on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 with polls open from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office located at 1033 Locust Street, Stephens City. In order to cast a ballot, you must be registered with the Office of Voter Registration and Election Administration located at 107 N. Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia. Voter Registration forms can be obtained from the Town Office or the Voter Registration Office. The deadline to register to vote is Monday, April 12, 2010 by 5:00 p.m. Deadlines to vote by absentee ballot are Tuesday, April 27, 2010 by mail, and Saturday, May 1, 2010 in person. If you have any questions regarding voting requirements, please contact the Voter Registrar's Office at (540)665-5660 or via e-mail at [fcvotes@co.frederick.va.us](mailto:fcvotes@co.frederick.va.us)

This year voters will go to the polls to

elect a Mayor to serve for four years and to elect three members to serve on Council for four-year terms each. Any citizen of the Town of Stephens City can file to run for a seat on Council if they meet candidate requirements as set by the State Board of Elections. Information about requirements and filing are available at the Town Office or from the Voter Registrar's Office at 107 N. Kent St., Winchester, VA. (540-665-5660). Candidate forms can be filed with the Registrar's Office after January 1, 2010. The deadline for candidate filing is Tuesday, March 2, 2010 by 7:00 p.m. in the Registrar's Office.

All residents of the Town of Stephens City, are encouraged to participate in the election process and vote for those who will represent you and your interests in local government.

Dianne MacMillan  
Town Clerk

#### **Frozen Water Lines**

Most of the time the first place to check for a frozen water line is an exposed drafty area beneath or within your home or business. Find and be aware of where the cutoff valve is within your home. **Do not open a water meter box** unless you have contacted the Town. Town water meters are insulated and not prone to freezing. If you have a problem with frozen water lines, during office hours you may call 540-869-3087, after hours contact 540-662-6162.



# Town Calendar of Events

## JANUARY

Jan.	1	<b>Town Office Closed– New Years Day</b>
Jan.	5	<b>Town Council at 7:30pm</b>
Jan.	11	Personnel Committee meeting at 5:00pm
Jan.	19	Historic Preservation Committee at 5:00pm
Jan.	21	Water/ Sewer meeting at 9:00 am Public Works meeting at 9:30 am Newtown Heritage Festival Mtg. at 7:30pm
Jan.	25	Parks & Recreation Commission at 7:30pm
Jan.	26	<b>Planning Commission at 7:30pm</b>
Jan.	27	Finance at 5:00pm



2010

*\* All meetings subject to change without notice w/ the exception of the Town Council meeting.*

## FEBRUARY

Feb.	2	<b>Town Council Meeting at 7:30pm.</b>
Feb.	3	<b>Water/ Sewer Bills Due without penalty</b>
Feb.	4	<b>Penalties added to Water/Sewer Bills</b>
Feb.	8	Personnel Committee at 5:00pm
Feb.	10	<b>Water Service to be Discontinued without payment</b>
Feb.	14	Valentine's Day
Feb.	16	Historic Preservation Committee at 7:30pm
Feb.	18	Water/ Sewer Meeting at 9:00am Public Works Meeting at 9:30am Newtown Heritage Festival at 7:30pm
Feb.	22	Parks & Recreation Commission at 7:30pm
Feb.	23	<b>Planning Commission at 7:30pm</b>
Feb.	24	Finance Committee at 5:00pm



We're on the web!  
[www.stephenscity.vi.virginia.gov](http://www.stephenscity.vi.virginia.gov)

## The Business Spotlight!

*The Businesses of the Stephens City Business Association would like to wish all the residents of the Town of Stephens City a Happy New Year! The Business Association is looking forward to a year full of events that will include the rescheduled Stephens City Business Expo this Spring, the 2nd Annual "Hop in at the Commons" and believe it or not, the 3rd Annual "Christmas at the Commons" in December of this year. The Business Association has steadily been growing and has been working on ways to better serve you as a community. When it comes to life's needs and necessities or that perfect gift for someone special, think LOCAL! Everything you need is right here in Stephens City, so visit a local business today!*

*We look forward to seeing you!*

